

**„Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu
Faculty of Orthodox Theology „St. Andrei Şaguna”**

**The Church choral activity from Orăştie
(abstract)**

Scientific coordinator

Pr.prof.univ.dr. Vasile Grăjdian

Candidate

Ioan-Marius Popa

Sibiu 2017

The Church choral activity from Orăștie

Ioan-Marius Popa

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	p. 1
INTRODUCTION	p. 5
Geographical, Historical and Cultural Framework	p.12
Orthodox Churches in Orăștie - Promoting Institutions of Romanian Culture and Spirituality	p. 15
CHAPTER I	
Choral activity in Orăștie between 1868-1947	
1.1. History of Church Coral Music in Banat and Transylvania. General Aspects	p. 20
1.2. The genesis of the church choir from Orăștie	p. 22
1.3. Hypotheses regarding the foundation of the <i>Choir from Orăștie</i>	p. 25
1.4. The activity of the church choir between 1868-1883	p. 28
1.5. Choral activity between 1883-1896	p. 32
1.6. The choral activity between 1896 and 1911. "The Reunion of Songs" and the Church Choir	p. 39
1.7. Coral Festival in Bucharest in 1906	
1.7.1. General context	p. 44
1.7.2. Choirs present at the 1906 Coral Festival in Bucharest	p. 46
1.7.3. Running of the 1906 Coral Festival in Bucharest	p. 47
1.7.4. Preparing "The Reunion of Songs" for the Coral Festival in Bucharest	p. 49
1.7.5. Presence of "The Reunion of Songs" at the Coral Festival in Bucharest	p. 51
1.8. The Church Choir between 1906 and 1919	p. 52
1.9. The collaboration between Elie Miron Cristea and Ioan Branga,	p. 55
1.10. Influence of Ioan Branga's Choir in Orăștie's area	p. 56
1.11. The repertoire of the Church choir from Orăștie between 1919-1925	p. 58
1.12. Musical Manuscripts from the Interwar Period	p. 60
1.13. The church choir "Armonia"	
1.13.1. The activity of the church choir "Armonia" between 1925-1948	p. 62

1.13.2. Influences of Banat Music in "Armonia" choir. Antoniu Sequens Collection	p. 65
1. 14. School choirs	p. 67
1. 15. "The Reunion of Songs" between 1911-1925	p. 72
1.16. "The Unirea" Choir	p. 76
1.17. The Choir of the Craftsmen Meeting	p. 77
1.18. Military music and the first operetta played in Orăștie	p. 80
1.19 "Gloria" Church of the Greek-Catholic Church in Orăștie	p. 82
1.20. The "Liedertafel" Choir of the C.A. from Orăștie	p. 83
1.21. Aspects of the musical life of the Hungarian community	p. 84
1.22. Conductors	
1.22.1. Ioan Bena	p. 85
1.22.2. Constantin Baicu	p. 87
1.22.3. Ioan Branga	p. 87
1.22.4. Valeriu Bora	p. 90
1.22.5. Ioan I. Ienea	p. 92
1.22.6. Nicolae Prația	p. 94
1.23. Analysis of religious songs composed or harmonized by Prof. Nicolae Prația	p. 96

CHAPTER II

Choral activity in Orăștie between 1948-1989

2.1. Musical Manuscripts from the Communist Period	p.107
2.2. The Choir of the Cathedral in Orăștie	
2.2.1. Period 1948-1958	p.113
2.2.2. Period 1959-1979	p.118
2.2.3. Period 1980-1989	p.121
2.3. Choir "Harmony" during the Communist period	p.127
2.4. The Choir of Priests from Orthodox Orthodox Deanery	p.139
2.5. The Choir of the Cultural House from Orăștie	p.140
2.6. School choirs	p.160
2.7. The Choir of the Factory Nr. 14 from Orăștie (1947-1960)	p.163
2.8. Fur Factory Choir "Vidra" (1951-1955)	p.164
2.9. The Choir of the Mechanical Plant Town (1988-1989)	p.164

2.10. Conductors	
2.10.1. Ion Apostol	p.165
2. 10.2. Ioan Gârliște	p.167
2. 10.3. Ioan Popa	p.169
2. 11. Analysis of religious songs composed or harmonized by Prof. Ioan Popa	p.173

CHAPTER III

Choral activity in Orăștie from 1990 to present

3. General Elements. Starting point	p.192
3. 1. The Choir of the Cathedral in Orastie	
3.1.1.Court of the Cathedral, 1990-2009	p.193
3.1.2. The Archangel Choir (1998-2000; 2004-2012)	p.197
3.1.3. Archangel Choir, 2012- present	p.201
3.2. Choir "Armonia" after 1990	
3.2.1. "Armonia", 1990-1998	p.210
3.2.2. "Armonia" Choir, 1999-2011	p.228
3.2.3. "Armonia" Choir, 2012-present	p.234
3.4. "Choreography" Choir - 1996-2017	p.236
3.5. The Ecumenical Pascal Concerto (1992-2009)	p.264
3.6. The Choir of the Orthodox Parish with the patronage "St. Nicholas"	p.266
3.7. The "Liedertafel" Chamber Choir of the C.A. from Orăștie,	p.268
3.8. Vocal Group "Anastasis"	p.270
3.9. Vocal Group "Epiphany"	p.270
3.10. Other actions or events with musical and coral specific	p.273
3.11. Conductors	
3.11.1. Petru Boloț	p.275
3.11.2. Petru-Androne Eli	p.277

CHAPTER IV

Choral Festival "Cu noi este Dumnezeu" from Orăștie

4. 1. Historical and Historical Contexts and Contexts	p.281
4. 2. The first Edition, 8-9 December 1990	p.284

4. 3. The second Edition, 14-15 December 1991	p.286
4. 4. The third Edition, December 12-13, 1992	p.288
4. 5. The 4-th Edition, November 27-28, 1993,	p.291
4. 6. The 5-th, Edition, 10-11 December 1994	p.293
4. 7. The 6-th Edition, 9-10 December 1995	p.294
4. 8. The 7-th Edition, 7-8 December 1996	p.296
4. 9. The 8-th Edition, 6-7 December 1997,	p.298
4. 10. The 9-th Edition, 5-6 December 1998	p.301
4. 11. The 10-th Edition, 4-5 December 1999	p.302
4. 12. The 11-th Edition, 2-3 December 2000	p.305
4. 13. The 12-th Edition, 1-2 December 2001	p.306
4. 14. The 13-th Edition, 7-8 December 2002	p.307
4. 15. The 14-th Edition, 6-7 December 2003	p.309
4. 16. The 15-th Edition, 4-5 December 2004	p.311
4. 17. The 16-th Edition, 3-4 December 2005	p.313
4. 18. The 17-th Edition, 2-3 December 2006	p.314
4. 19. The 18-th Edition, 8-9 December 2007	p.317
4. 20. The 19-th Edition, 20 December 2008	p.319
4. 21. The 20-th Edition, December 12, 2009	p.320
4. 22. The 21-th Edition, 4-5 December 2010	p.322
4. 23. The 22-th Edition, December 3, 2011	p.325
4. 24. The 23-th Edition, December 15, 2012	p.327
4. 25. The 24-th Edition, December 14, 2013	p.330
4. 26. The 25-th Edition, 13 December 2014	p.331
4. 27. The 26-th, Edition, 12 December 2015	p.333
4. 28. The 27-th Edition, 10-11 December 2016	p.334
CONCLUSIONS	p.337
ANNEXES	p.349
BIBLIOGRAPHY	p.377

The Church choral activity from Orăștie

Keywords: Church choir, choral activity, choral festival, choral competition, repertoire, composer, conductor, sacred music.

The Choir from Orăștie is a phrase that honours the namesake town. In most situations, in different circumstances, any format shown as Orăștie Choir is regarded with great appreciation and respect Romanian cultural space.. *The Choir* is one of the important and substantial symbols of this town. The town, in which appeared the famous *Palia* in 1582, is the place where it is certified one of the oldest choral tradition in Romania. We say from the beginning, that by the phrasal construction *the Choir from Orăștie*, we must understand an entire choral tradition, a phenomenon that gives Orăștie a particular mark on the Romanian cultural map, and not a single choir.

In the **Introduction** and in **the first information of the thesis**, we want to present the entire context of the foundation of the choirs from Orăștie. Our research refers only to the choral tradition of the town, and the main elements from the local history, will be put in the proper moments, mentioning the important events from the history of the *Palia's town*.

The main choice of this theme can be found in the 150 years old tradition of the choral activity in Orăștie, a less studied theme and often ignored. The choirs founded here in 1863 and then in 1868, have encouraged the apparition of other choirs, in the town and in the surrounding area, formations that developed an important activity at the beginning of the XX century, by an

The primary motivation in choosing this theme can be found in the tradition of nearly 150 years of choral activity, theme very briefly researched and often ignored. The choirs founded here in 1863 and then in 1868 motivated the appearance of other bands in the town and surroundings, managing to know momentum very especially in the twentieth century, through exemplary job leading to achieving outstanding results in music competitions and by the presence of talented conductors: Ioan Branga, Nicolae Prația, Ioan Popa and Petru Adrone Eli. Orăștie did not receive a musical school profile, the choir is generally the only framework in which they could achieve perpetual musical education. Long musical tradition, outstanding achievements and personalities of the choral line field work are the basic motivation for this research.

The choir was the element that has coalesced around his music and art lovers. Unlike other parts of the country, the establishment choir here was not only meant for development and emancipation of Romanians in a historical context tumultuous, but also had a spiritual purpose: the existence of choirs to

sing on Sundays and holidays Divine Liturgy answers. Since the beginning, the band had a liturgical character. We see that the first mention of the choir is coming from the Romanian Orthodox religious school, by a decision of the Parish and school Committee, which proving the band's church. First documented in 1863 the band of the Saxons is the choir "Liedertafel", which we will mention in the highlights of the cultural tradition of the city, but not the subject of this research. We should say at the outset that our research focused on the study undertaken by the Romanian choral activities, such activities being developed mostly by the Orthodox Church

Regarding the research stage, we can say that the choral issue is not a subject systematically analyzed in reference works. The only research that was concerned by cultural and musical theme of Orăștie was "Choir from Orăștie" the Professor Ion Iliescu. The research Professor Ion Iliescu brings to the fore, the existence of serious musical concerns of the Romanians after 1865 certification useful as a argument for the choral work here, since 1868.

We consider it very necessary, in the scientific research, to present extra-liturgical choirs of Orăștie. It has found in general that both the press and the critics concerned about cultural activity in Orăștie, did not address the church choir liturgical activity. First, even though the initiative to provide answers to religious services every Sunday Mass is an admirable fact, it does not constitute a special event to be permanently reflected in the press and monographs. Secondly, extra ecclesia or secular activities are those which give special value for the church choirs, by the mission and confession of the choir is addressing to an audience different from the faithful service of public worship. In this respect, especially between affirmation and consecration Choir of Orăștie, it is necessary to see extra-liturgical or secular activities attended by first bands.

Chapter I

The analyze of all the data highlights a long-term work Choir from Orastie. The founding of the choir "Liedertafel" in 1863 and in 1868 by Romanian choir teacher Ioan Bena is attesting serious concerns in Orăștie in music, whether it comes from the church whether we refer to educational and cultural environment. The first years of the Romanian choir were marked by a strong instability of the band and a modest activity. Data on the band are often confusing at first consisted of all infants and "private", and then find the information that was made either infants or the "Youth Study" or the "private". Presence and then abandoned by Saxon choir conductor who was not understanding the Orthodox Mass is proving the information of a liturgical choir.

The coming of the teacher Ioan Branga, student musician of George Dima, in Orastie in 1883 led to the reorganization thorough formation and affirmation choir here, especially with the concert held at the

general meeting of ASTRA in 1884, an occasion the church choir was Orastie's representative band of all the communities. The departure of Ioan Branga of Orastie due to jealousies and enmities unfair caused a slight destabilization of the choir. By the help of teacher Toma Popovici and especially of teacher Constantin Baicu, choir work was not interrupted. The returning in Orastie of Ioan Branga in 1887 led to the band to resume progress. In the last years of the nineteenth century, we find the presence of a mixed choir of the town, which was set as "The Reunion of Songs" in 1896 and a male choir of the Orthodox Church, set up a modest prestige. By the founding of the reunion we often find confusing information about the work carried out Drastic choir.

The participation of the mixed choir in various events, and later "The Reunion of Songs" in various manifestations in Orastie and elsewhere increased the visible prestige of the band. After 1902, "The Song Reunion" activated in the church, replacing the men's choir, and for several years we have the documented presence of liturgical and secular of the Reunion. Beautiful performance obtained locally stimulated the Ensemble in participating at the Festival held in Bucharest in 1906. The participation in the Royal Jubilee "The Reunion of Songs" in the festival organized by D. G. Kiriac was the most important moment of the Choir of Orastie the first period of existence. Ioan Branga personally received praise Diploma and Gold Medal and "weigh Meeting" was awarded the Diploma of Honor and Gold Medal.

Obtaining beautiful results encouraged activity "Reunion". After the return from Bucharest, we see continued secular concerts of the "The Song Reunion" and a focus on religious repertoire. After the concert held in 1911 at the inauguration of the Hotel Central auditoria, teacher Ioan Branga was withdrawn from the management and conducting of the Reunion and was only dedicated to the church choir.

The activity of choral experienced an interesting stage, by setting the chorus of the "Reunion of the craftsmen", by an organized chorus Orthodox and the chorus "Liedertafel", but a weakening of the presence of the "The Reunion of Songs", the head of which have been more temporary conductors. Ionel Rădulescu tenor was the conductor who managed to carry on the good name of the band. At the ASTRA General Assembly held in Orăștie in 1913, the "The Reunion of Songs" conducted by Aurel Medrea, person hired only for this event. In the coming years "The Reunion of Songs" was directed again by Ionel Rădulescu and until 1925 we find as conductors: A. Schmidt, I. Fleșeriu, Constantin Baicu, Gheorghe Pârvu and Gheorghe Oancea. In times of extreme stress, learning. Ioan Branga prepared and conducted occasional "The Reunion of Songs" responding positively to cultural requests of Orastie.

After 1920, "The Reunion of Songs" did not have a special activity, choral landscape is dominated by the choir "Reunion of the craftsmen", choir "Armonia", choir "Liedertafel" and school choirs. The refusal of prof. Nicolae Prația to conduct the "The Reunion of Songs" in 1925, led to its abolition. Following the establishment of Highschool "Aurel Vlaicu" we find a rich musical business diversification,

the emergence of school choirs and orchestras. The contribution of music teachers who have worked here Gheorghe Pârveu (1919-1924) and Nicolae Prația (1925-1947) is undeniable, teachers who have undertaken countless journeys school vocal-instrumental ensemble and choir. We remember organizing several joint concerts with choir and orchestra school band and "The Reunion of the craftsmen", directed by prof. Valeriu Bora.

Establishment of several choirs was the merit of talented conductors who knew how to attract people around them willing and able. Through priest Ioan Ienea, the Greek-Catholic Archpriest of Orăștie, and prof. Valeriu Bora, it was founded the choir "Gloria" of the Greek-Catholic and the choir "Unirea". In 1928 it was staged operetta „La șezătoare”, by Tiberiu Brediceanu, a premiere possible by the contribution of prof. Savel Horceag, head of the local military music.

Of all the conductors, prof. Nicolae Pratia is the personality we can clearly notice. Student musician of Timotei Popovici and student appreciated by Augustin Bena and great musical personalities of the time, Nicolae Prația is the first composer certificated of Orăștie. The publication of the carol *Trei Crai*, in the Timotei Popovici collection, marks a new episode in the process of national affirmation of the Choir from Orăștie. The special merit of prof. Nicolae Prația includes: granting the name "Armonia" of the choir church "Adormirea Maicii Domnului" in 1926, the establishment choir mixed high school students "Maica Domnului" and the guidance of music given to many students that have become over the years important Romanian personalities in theological and cultural environment. Through conductors who worked in the first stage of the Choir of Orăștie (according to our classification), *Palia's town* was visited by important personalities of Romanian music: George Dima, Timotei Popovici, Ioan Vidu and Tiberiu Brediceanu.

Chapter II

Communist regime brought significant changes in all areas of Romanian society. In the present research, our study now defines the second period of activity Choir from Orastie. Church choirs were closed for a short period in early 1948, the band "Armonia" is reactivated at the cathedral in Orastie in July-August 1948 under the guidance of prof. Ion Brătescu. The choir had uninterrupted activity since then but has kept the name "Armonia" just a few years. We remind chronological contribution to the cathedral choir conductors Aurel Subescu, Ioan Macarie, again prof. Ion Brătescu, Ioan Macarie Jr., Ioan Gârliște (at times with the lack of a permanent conductor), Ion Apostol, Cornel Rusu, Prof. Ioan Popa and Doru Părău. We find care leadership parish office to singers effort by providing for payment of a symbolic nature, and organize several trips and pilgrimages.

At the Orthodox Parish II of Orăștie, where the situation was more difficult, the choir was disbanded by methods unworthy and actual choral work resumed only between 1953-1955 by John

Macarius intake. There followed another period of suspension of the band, and work resumed without interruption around the years 1964-1965 involving Ion Apostol. Unlike the administrative-financial management of the Cathedral, the Office parish church "Adormirea Maicii Domnului", the priest Zaharia Radu and conductor Ion Apostol, preferred to organize several trips and pilgrimages to benefit chorus, which in time led to a good coagulation of the collective. Notice after 1971 until 1989 organizing an annual pilgrimage for several days, sometimes even two such exits per year in full atheistic communist regime. After the departure of Ion Apostol around 1980, the choir was conducted by Doru Părău and then by the church singer Ioan Lucaciu. From October 1987 the choir "Armonia" was conducted by prof. Ioan Popa, which brought in a short time the particular developments of the band.

A comparative study of the two Orthodox church choirs shows that until 1980, the cathedral choir had a superior musical prestige than choir "Armonia" by the presence of constant members and a more elaborate repertoire. After 1980 we see a considerable decline of the cathedral choir and "Harmony", largely due to frequent changes of conductors. Bands reach mid 1985 some equal quality and after 1988 the choir "Armonia" with the guidance of prof. Ioan Popa exceeded poise cathedral choir. Also during 1980 we have certified in Orăștie the choir Orthodox Parish priests, directed by priest Avram Petric, the Archpriest of Orăștie.

On the other hand, we find a remarkable activity in the House of Culture, the choir and demi-symphonic orchestra organized here in the years 1948-1951 by prof. Ion Brătescu. From 1951 to 1987 with small intermittent the Choir and Orchestra of the Culture House were trained by prof. Ioan Popa. The ensemble has won numerous awards at various competitions regional / county interregional / inter-county and national. If in the previous period, we found a few moments of brilliance of the Choir from Orăștie, after 1951, the band House of Culture managed annually obtaining distinctions or offering a concert impact inter-county and national level, assisting with consistent performance and not just occasionally.

Among the highlights of vocal-instrumental ensemble of the House of Culture, we mention the staging of the operetta Crai nou, by Ciprian Porumbescu, in 1957 (directed by Ilie Micu) and operetta Ana Lugojana by Filaret Barbu in 1960-1961. We remember some operetta performances of Ana Lugojana in which the roles of soloist were performed by lyrical artists: Lia Hubic and Cornel Fănățeanu of the Romanian National Opera in Cluj. In 1961, the operetta ensemble participated in the sixth contest of amateur teams. Choir and orchestra were promoted national stage, getting the steps leading Prize. To present at the national, the musical collective from Orăștie, conducted by prof. Ioan

Popa, received valuable guidance from author operetta composer Filaret Barbu and from the stage director Viorel Gomboșiu. Among participants who had great merit in the staging of the operetta we remember: accompanist Roșnavschi Francis, artistic director Prof. Cornelia Secarea instructor choreographer Barbu Maria, Drogeanu Mioara, prompter stage Manole Secui. On the national stage, the ensemble was awarded with the Second Prize and the First prize was not awarded, the event is recorded in local monographs as the culmination of choir from Orăștie.

Obtaining beautiful results requested passage again prof. Ioan Popa higher education in Cluj. The departure of the Professor of Orastie represented a slight decline in the choir and symphonic orchestra abolition. With the return prof. Ioan Popa in Orastie 1965, the band knows again a strong foothold in the local and county level, and in 1968 was celebrated the centenary choir from Orăștie. Also during this period, as an act of great courage artistic repertoire of the choir were introduced patriotic songs banned by the communist regime of the 1950s as the Avram Iancu's poem, by Timothy Popovici. House of Culture choir won numerous awards at choral competitions attended numerous prizes at county and inter-county stage. Of all the prizes we remember getting prize from the national to the tenth contest of artistic groups for amateurs on March 27, 1971 and the gaining of the Gold Medal for Choir House of Culture and the First Prize as a conductor in the national phase of the competition amateur artistic groups organized in Sibiu, on 13 July 1974. The choir won numerous awards continue in the years 1975-1981. After 1982, the choir participated only in non-competitive events, and some unworthy attitude by management Town Committee for Culture led to a decrease in activity after the choir from 1984 to 1985, and following the retirement of prof. Ioan Popa in 1987, the group disbanded itself.

Also in the communist era, in the years 1950-1960 were organized several choirs Orastie's schools by teachers Ștefan Răduț, Ion Brătescu and Ioan Popa. The work of these teachers was crowned by obtaining several prizes at regional / county and inter-regional / inter-county. Through prof. Ioan Popa, middle-school choir and orchestra agricultural House of Culture presented the operetta La seceris, by Tiberiu Brediceanu between 1951-1954. In the school year 1953-1954 the two teams staged operetta „Crai Nou” by Ciprian Porumbescu, offering performances in Orastie, Deva, Simeria, Hunedoara, Alba-Iulia and Sebes. After 1967 the outstanding results in school choirs and instrumental bands were obtained only by prof. Ioan Popa, who worked first at "Aurel Vlaicu", and in recent years until retirement (1979 to 1987) at School No. 1. We remember here many first, second and third prizes at school county and inter-county competitions.

Like previous stage through prof. Ioan Popa, Orăștie's choir was appreciated by the frequent visits of musical personalities: Filaret Barbu, Mircea Neagu, Radu Paladi, Gheorghe Dumitresc, D. D. Stancu, Marius Cuteanu, Dumitru Jompan, Vasile Pop Baleni and especially Dumitru D. Botez, who appreciated the work Choir House of Culture, which is evident by exemplifying the „Treaty band singing and choral conducting”, the first volume. The band and its conductor received assessments from other composers such as Nicolae Kirculescu, Gheorghe Șoima, Ioan D. Chirescu and Constantin Arvinte.

Choral activities were conducted in local enterprises, with the conductors prof. Ion Brătescu, prof. Ștefan Răduț, Francisc Rojnavschi and prof. Ioan Popa. Unfortunately their work was less relevant to culture throughout the musical history of Orăștie, it is rarely mentioned in the press time and local monographs. We can see in the first two historical phases Choir of Orăștie, a great collaboration between all local bands conductors, which show a unity of the choral activities and the presence of religious aspect in all assemblies.

Chapter III

In the first years after 1989, we see a trend of diversification of church choral work by reorganizing the cathedral choir, conductor Doru Părău and then prof. Nicolae Hațegan; the choir "Armonia", conducted by prof. Ioan Popa; establishment of a choir in the Orthodox Parish "St. Nicholas" by Tudor Munteanu and then directed by the courtesy of the church singers here; reappearance in public space of the Saxon evangelical community choir "Liedertafel", conductor Werner Tudose; and a shy appearance of children choir "Lumină lină", directed by prof. Silvia Muntean.

Choir Cathedral, though it was a band that had a constant activity during the communist period, failed to exceed a church band. Quality choir was modest, repertoire rather poor and conductors here were not thoroughly involved in affirming the band. We note that in many cultural events, the choir was absent, the organizers preferring to invite the representative town choir "Armonia" and the choir "Liedertafel" of the Saxons. We also remember the organization through the Association "Ortopraxia" Concerto Ecumenical Pascal from 1992 to 2009.

If the second half of 1980, two Orthodox church choirs were approximately equal quality presence, the band "Armonia" had a remarkable evolution since 1989. Choir "Armonia" was invited to give liturgical answers in different localities in Alba and Hunedoara county, having a distinguished

presence. The organization of the International Ecumenical Concert of July 1991, participation at the "Cu noi este Dumnezeu" and Pascal Ecumenical Concert, Choir "Armonia" have made a strong affirmation in the domain of sacred music. Special activity of prof. Ioan Popa in the choir "Armonia" has resulted in the establishment of two bands in the subordination of parish "Adormirea Maicii Domnului" Orastie II. Here was established in 1996 the children's choir "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" conductor prof. Peter-Androne Eli, and in 1997 the chamber group "Maica Domnului", conductor Dan-Marius Șfarț. The group "Maica Domnului" was moved in early 1998 to the cathedral, where Dan-Marius Șfarț and the priest Ionel Dumbravă founded the choir "Archangels", a band with a great evolution, over about two years. After crossing the Greek-Catholic cult conductor, chorus work was suspended for four years.

In the early post-revolutionary period, the band "Armonia" has dominated the landscape of choral activities in Orăștie. The main cultural events of the town benefited from the presence of the choir, which gave many recitals at the significant events of the city. We remember the concerts in 1993 at ASTRA General Assembly on 26 September; concert held to celebrate 125 years of *the Choir of Orăștie* on 26 November; celebrating 75 years since the establishment of the High School "Aurel Vlaicu" on December 17, 1994; concert held on April 29, 1995 when the Orăștie was elevated to municipality, etc. During 1990-1998 meant for choir "Armonia" a thorough appropriation of a sacred repertoire according to tradition and claims teams, and its enrichment with many secular songs.

Until the appearance of the band "Vlastarele Orăștiei", but still a short time afterwards, the choir "Armonia" was overall the best performing and most appreciated in Orăștie and in Hunedoara County. Under the careful guidance of prof. Ioan Popa choir "Armonia" has exceeded a simple church choir and became a choir representative Orăștiei and after 1991 with intensive collaboration with the Culture House. The diversion that regarded the celebrating of 130 years of *the Choir of Orăștie*, on June 27, 1998, the selfish tendencies and undue determined early setbacks for "Armonia". On August 15, 1998, in a context cloudy and unworthy, prof. Ioan Popa was retired from management of "Armonia" and the sequence of events was swept over the band caused a distrust of the authorities to support the choir. For a short period "Armonia" was directed by Dan-Marius Șfarț and from November 1998 to September 2014, the band was directed teacher Petru Boloț.

We can find distrust authorities in the matter of bands made up of adults, making a comparison between the promotion made to these assemblies and promote or support given to some time ago to the choir "Vlăstarele Orăștiei". Children's Choir has been widely promoted and supported in particular mandate's mayor of Iosif Blaga and Alexandru Munteanu, which led to the band's particular trend. The

poor quality of the old choir of the cathedral, the difficult temperament of some members of "Armonia", the instability of the choir "Arhanghelii" in the early 2000s led to a focus of the financial burden of local authorities and private business owners to children choir conducted by prof. Petru-Androne Eli. An objective analysis reveals, however, that efforts to support the "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" were not in vain, the band having today 36 honorable awards won in competitions only abroad, an objective difficult to achieve with a choir of adults or older people.

Choir "Vlăstarele Orăștiei", conducted over 20 years of prof. Peter-Androne Eli is the band that has managed to bring fame for the *Choir of Orăștie*, not only in Romania but also abroad in numerous European countries and China. Band activity is impressive, and we anticipate before 36 international awards, without adding the awards festival of sacred music "Cu noi este Dumnezeu" and various awards in competitions (Olympics) choral nationally.

In the early years, the choir has given answers in the parish Sunday liturgy, but also in other churches and monasteries in Alba, Hunedoara and Timiș counties. Also, the choir participated in the festival "Timotei Popovici" from Caransebeș and the religious music festival at Sâmbăta de Sus. Making a beautiful collaboration with the band "Anastasis" in Timișoara and conductor Dan-Milan Mengheși in 1997-1998, was a turning point for the affirmation "Vlastarele Orăștiei". Through conductor Dan-Milan Mengheși "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" have performed in Timișoara and then recorded the first audio-tape *Pricesne și cântece liturgice*. In total, the choir has recorded three tapes containing choral songs.

Performance in international competitions was prepared with the participation of "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" in numerous musical journeys in Europe in 2001-2004. We mention here that milestone to answering Mass Romanian church in Paris in 2001. Since 2007 Holy Mass responses came out from the repertoire of the choir, which is unfortunate, given that "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" were established as church liturgical ensemble.

Among the many presences abroad, the choir was honored with awards, we remember main points: qualifying for the World Choral Olympics Silver Bremenn in 2004; obtaining the silver medal in the category Folklore and bronze medals edition World Championship in Graz, 2011; selection of five students in the content of the World Peace Choir in China, 2012; obtaining the silver medal at the Grand Prix of Nations, Magdeburg (Germany) in 2015 and participation in the World Choir Peace in 2016.

Alongside the locations mentioned choir "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" was present at other competitions, where it earned Silver, Bronze or different honorary distinctions, reminiscent

participation in Zwickau, Prague, Vienna, Rome, Sombor, Riva del Garda Riga. At the moment, the results and the intense activity carried out under the direction of conductor prof. Petru-Androne Eli choir "Vlăstarele Orăștiei" became a true ambassador of all Romanian culture and music abroad, as a symbol of the Palia's town and one of the best choirs in our country.

Regarding the other church choirs, things are much simpler. "Armonia" has kept the tradition of the parish choir Orăștie II, maintaining cooperation with the House of Culture and under the guidance of teacher Petru Boloț participated in 2001-2004 at numerous festivals in Banat, as well as various pilgrimages and tours in country. After 2005, the loss of valuable choir members and various reasons as aging of some persons resulted in a marked decrease in the quality of the band. Cathedral Choir and the choir "Liedertafel" experienced a considerable decline during 2000-2001. The return of Dan-Marius Șfarț in the Orthodox Cathedral and reactivation band "Arhanghelii" in 2004 revived the work of the church choir. The "Arhanghelii" made beautiful local projects between 2005-2006, the highlight being the recital offered live public television station TVR Cultural in Bucharest in December 2006. Evolution and number formation stagnated and regressed significantly after 2007.

Withdrawal of Doru Parau, made possible the union of old choir and union with "Arhanghelii" in autumn 2009 saw a revival of the band, with Dan-Marius Șfarț as conductor, but for a little while. For choir "Arhanghelii" the situation has changed radically in the coming as conductor of the young Ioan-Marius Popa in the summer of 2012. There was seen a significant progress, enriching the repertoire and winning a prestigious not it has ever enjoyed the choir of the cathedral. Under the direction of new conductor were taken about five years 27 travels in the country and three tours abroad.

We remember the participating of choir "Archangels" at festivals organized in Deva (2013) Caransebeș (2014-2016), Zalău (2014) Lugoj (2015), Posta (2015), Fărcașa (2015) and obtaining three Bronze diplomas at two international competitions, the first one was festival "Petr Eben" Prague 2014 (section large mixed choir) and the second one was "Bratislava Cantat II", 2015 (sections Orthodox sacred music and sacred music). In 2016, the band participated in international choral festival held in Sliedrecht, Netherlands (non-competitive), where he was awarded an honorary degree.

Liturgical plan was developed by expanding and enriching the repertoire with appropriate specific answers choir held numerous Episcopal liturgies celebrated by Archbishop Laurențiu Streza, Archbishop of Sibiu and Metropolitan of Transylvania and PS Gurie Georgiu, Bishop of Deva and Hunedoara. Under the current conductor, the choir responded Sunday liturgical songs in the Romanian churches in Brno (Czech Republic) in 2014 and Vienna in 2015 and in the Metropolitan Cathedral in

Iași on 6 November 2016. By participating in the last five editions of the festival, organized in the cathedral of Orăștie, between 2012-2016, the choir "Archangels" won three First prizes (2012, 2013 and 2015), two Awards of Excellence (2014 and 2016), the "Cultural Merit" from the parish (2014) Prize ASTRA Rediviva (2015). At present, the choirs "Vlastarele Orăștiei" and "Arhanghelii" are bands that go with dignity honor *Choir of Orăștie*, the only representative assemblies of the city.

The chapter dealing with post-revolutionary choral work we can include choir reorganized in December 2015 in listening to Orăștie III Orthodox parish and Greek Catholic parish choir, conducted today by Mrs. Liliana Cristea. After the death of teacher Petru Boloț, in February 2015 the choir "Armonia" is conducted so far by Nicolae Stanc.

The appearance of the group "Anastasis" in the musical-theological plan led to good repositioning of Orthodox sacred music since 2001. The moment of maximum affirmation of the group was represented by obtaining first prize at the festival "Cu noi este Dumnezeu" in December 2009. The early 2010, the group has not worked, being established group "Epifania" at the initiative of young scholars Alexandru Oltean and Ioan-Marius Popa. Group "Epifania" offered answers liturgical liturgy bishop committed Archdiocese Alba Iulia Archdiocese Diocese of Arad and Deva and Hunedoara; twice won second prize at the festival "Cu noi este Dumnezeu" (2012 and 2013) and was awarded second prize at the national competition "Lumină lină" organized Deva in 2013. The group gave concerts at significant events in Orastie and offered carol concerts in the counties of Alba, Arad, Hunedoara and Mureș, and the most important concert was held at the residence of the Royal House of Săvârșin in 2010. Although the group's musical quality is appreciated at present, the activity "Epiphany" declined only to carol concerts or recitals of sacred music, two members of the band are priests in different parishes, and the music supervisor is also the choir "Archangels" of the cathedral.

Conslusions

The last chapter is the result of growing chorus Orastie through Sacred Music Festival "Cu noi este Dumnezeu". Organization and constant running of the event would not have been possible without the prestige obtained after a long time activitie conducted by prof. Ioan Popa. We must be aware that the participation of all choirs, with few exceptions, in the editions I-IV was due to invitations from prof. Ioan Popa, personality being capable of generating and organizing such events.

If the inception of the event in 2014, the festival involved all line organizational secular institutions of county and local authorities, from the edition of 2015, the event was organized with

difficulties only by Orăștie I Orthodox Parish and Orthodox Orăștie Deanery as well as material aid offered by some local sponsors from the private sector.

As we observed, enriching the repertoire was a phenomenon that enjoyed generally all participating ensembles. Without the festival certainly coral-religious activity was more irrelevant and meaningless for many years, at least in the Banat and Transylvania. Analyze each issue in particular, attests to the importance of the national festival, in the presence of various editions of many choirs in the extra-Carpathian Romanian. Edition XXVII, through the participation of many choirs from various parts of the country had a national character. We bring forward presence choir "Pro Musica" in Gyula, Hungary in the jubilee edition of December 2004, which marked the unofficial "international" edition of the festival "Cu noi este Dumnezeu".

Certainly, for the Orthodox Church's missionary activity in Orăștie, the festival had an undeniable merit. The possibility of affirmation and promotion of religious creations resulted in a visible appreciation for Church and the competition was a missionary means exploited especially by the Diocese of Arad and Hunedoara between 1990-2007. Presented annually, sometimes even in the two days of the festival, especially in the first editions, the Reverend Father Timotei Sevciciu made a formidable Christological confession by assessing choirs participating, especially through the beautiful words of doctrine, carefully prepared and exposed.

As we have seen in other chapters, the jury was a means within Orăștie was visited by distinguished personalities and theological contemporary music. Recall from 1990 to the present time, the presence of the presidents distinguished panel: prof.univ.dr. Petre Crăciun, prof.univ.dr. Constantin Rîpă, prof.univ.dr. Ovidiu Giulvezan, pr.prof.univ.dr.Vasile Stanciu, pr.prof.univ.dr. Vasile Grăjdian, pr.prof.univ.dr. Domin Adam, pr.conf.univ.dr. Mihai Brie and pr.lect.univ.dr. Sorin Dobre. As relevant members we mention: pr.lect.univ.dr. Gheorghe Neacșu, lect.univ.dr. Costel-Mirel I.V. Nechita, prof. Petru-Androne Eli, prof. Gelu Onțanu-Craciun, prof. Delia Brilinsky and teacher / prof. Petru Boloț. Although it has been repeatedly invited to be a member of the jury, prof. Ioan Popa felt that after the anniversary of 130 years of choral Orăștie, his musical mission has ended.

For objectivity of scientific research we note that the presence of members of the jury without musical education, has often led to a curtailment of prestige competition. From 2011 through a serious commitment towards organizational Narcis Terchet priest, it was made gradually professionalize the festival. The following year, after changes to the console choir cathedral priest Narcis Terchet received from the new conductor, information approved and useful that led to a constant evolution and leap value obviously the festival, an event recognized at present including Choral by the National

Association of Romania. Currently, the quality demanding festival organization is maintained by pr.drd. Călin Mihuț, Orthodox archpriest of Orăștie.

In conclusion we can expose at least three arguments proving the value and uniqueness *Choir from Orăștie*. Firstly, Orăștie's Choir has enjoyed the active presence of talented and deserving conductors, thus leading recalling John Bena John Branga Nicholas Prația, Ioan Popa and Petru-Androne Eli. The second argument presupposes achieving remarkable results of the bands here. Orăștie's Choir has been awarded numerous awards in competitions both national and international as being a band unanimously appreciated. The last argument attesting work great conductors and ensembles here through visits and assessments by great Romanian musicians, recalling here those who have had a constant presence in the *Palia's town*: George Dima, Timotei Popovici Tiberiu Brediceanu Filaret Barbu, Mircea Neagu DD Botez, Dumitru Jompan and Marius Cuteanu. Also in this argument, we can remind the presence of prestigious jury presidents of the Festival "Cu noi este Dumnezeu".

Orăștie town was once a famous cultural and religious center in the presence of numerous personalities. At the moment, reality confirms that in terms of culture, only the Church, by organizing the Festival "God with us", remained a supporter of the culture of good quality and religious choirs, a good means of confession of Christ society. Our research enables us to say that the actions and results through conductors to discern and organizing 27 Festival of Sacred Music "Cu noi este Dumnezeu" Choir from Orăștie is a true monument of culture and spirituality of Romanians.